

Community Development Connection

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

MAY 23, 2013

Community Development Department - Town of Amherst



Sign Regulations

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It's finally spring and with the nice weather comes the season where temporary signs begin popping up all over Amherst. For the resourceful businesses and curious property owners, the following is a quick overview of some relevant sign regulations found in Section 3.4 of the Zoning Ordinance:

- One "Open" sign/flag may be displayed for each separate business unit during regular business hours without a permit.
- Temporary Event signs (*think yard sales and special events*) are permitted for display not to exceed 15 days and must be removed at the end of the event. This signage does require a permit from the Community Development office, however there is no fee for the permit.
- Promotional devices and similar signs (*think of the contractor sign your roofer puts up while installing your new roof*) not exceeding four square feet are allowed for a period not to exceed 30 days with permission from the property owner, except in the Historic District. No permit is required for this signage.
- No signs are allowed to be placed within the Town or State right-of-way, including intersections.

The Sign Ordinance is a rather nuanced regulation that is hard to sum up in a few quick bullets. If you have questions or concerns, please give us a call or send an email. We are happy to answer any questions you may have on what types of signage are and are not allowed in Amherst.

Did You Know— Historic District?

Did you know Amherst has the largest Historic District in the State?

It comprises more than 1600 acres and 120 buildings. The district encompasses the central Village area as well as the area on State Route 122 by the Police Station, out Christian Hill Road, and over to Boston Post Road. The District is so designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior, under whose basic regulations the National Historic Landmark designation has been earned.

Why was this Historic District designated a National Historic Landmark?

A: There are over 100 properties of historical significance in the District covering the period from 1700-1924 and incorporating important Colonial, Federal, and Greek Revival properties. Unlike some towns where a few properties may be on the National Register, the entire Historic District is on the National Register. In brief, the Historic District has played a significant role in understanding the history of our Town, and our role in local and regional history. If you are curious about the Historic District, we have a great little brochure the Historic District Commission volunteers created that you can pick up at Town Hall for free or [on our website](#).



Welcome to Historic
Amherst Village



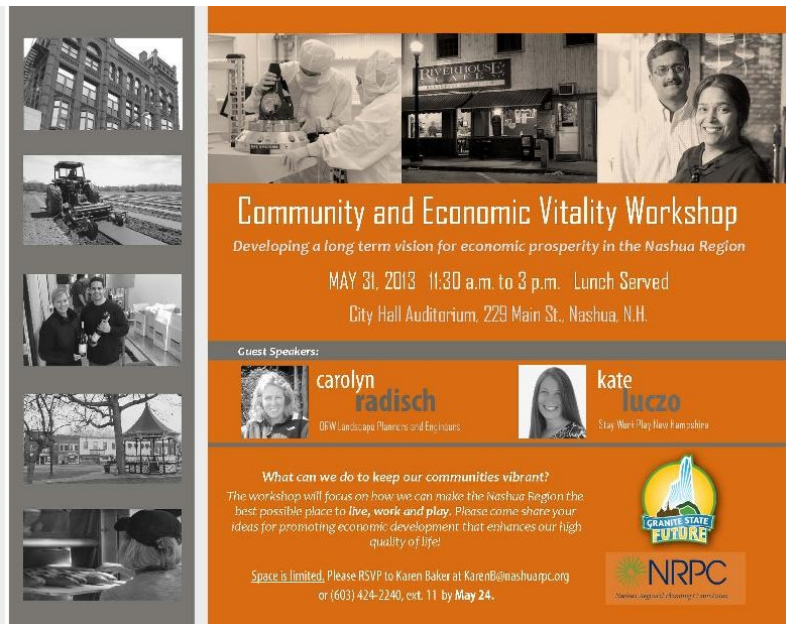
Welcome to Amherst!



Now located at 105 Route 101A, Unit 4 Climax Portable Machining & Welding Systems: *Redefining state of the art for the machining and welding world. Applying it for more powerful, precise, on-site solutions. We meet mission-critical head on; answering the tightest-tolerance tasks with the tools and perspective that efficiency and profitability demand. When the world's largest companies need solutions for their most complicated and challenging machining and welding applications, they rely on us. When success is non-negotiable, Climax performs. Welcome to our world.*

Check them out at: www.climaxportable.com/

Please join us in welcoming this company to Amherst!



Community and Economic Vitality Workshop
Developing a long term vision for economic prosperity in the Nashua Region

MAY 31, 2013 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch Served
City Hall Auditorium, 229 Main St., Nashua, N.H.

Guest Speakers:

carolyn radisch
D&W Landscape Planners and Engineers

kate luczo
Stay Work Play Nashua Foundation

What can we do to keep our communities vibrant?
The workshop will focus on how we can make the Nashua Region the best possible place to live, work and play. Please come share your ideas for promoting economic development that enhances our high quality of life!

Space is limited. Please RSVP to Karen Baker at karen@nashuaprc.org or (603) 424-2240, ext. 11 by May 24.

GRANITE STATE FUTURE
NRPC
Nashua Region Planning Commission

Round II Community Planning Grant Update

In March 2013, the Town of Amherst and the Planning Board were awarded a grant of \$29,300 to utilize the results of the Regulatory Review of the six water resource related ordinances, to combine and update with current Best Management Practices (BMP's) the Watershed Protection District and the Wetlands Protection District in order to protect the high quality drinking water and watershed of the Town of Amherst and the region. The revision to these ordinances will be an important contribution to protecting the Town's and Region's natural resources from degradation, as a majority of the Town's commercial and industrial zoned land is undeveloped or underdeveloped, and sits atop one of the State's highest quality aquifers.

This project will kick off at the end of May. The Planning Board reviewed three requests for responses to the Request for Qualifications for the grant and unanimously recommends the Fougere Planning & Development proposal for approval to the Board of Selectmen at their May 28, 2013, meeting. After the final consultant selection is made, the project will get started with a significant outreach event to get the community and all the associated stakeholders involved. Keep your eyes out for information on this project; and if you already know you would like to become more involved, please contact Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director, to see how you can help.

Historic District Commission Regulations Update

The Historic District Commission has drafted and reviewed criteria for determining when a waiver should be granted from the Districts Regulations. By adopting the following criteria both applicants and the Board have the advantage of knowing what factors are most important in deliberations and that the purpose and intent of the district will be protected. The following language is proposed for adoption at a public hearing at the Commission's July 18th meeting:

Section 2.1.C: The Commission shall have the discretion to waive any condition contained in these Regulations for good cause shown. A waiver of these Regulations will be granted if each of the following conditions is found:

Granting the waiver would benefit the public interest

By granting the waiver substantial justice would be done

Granting the waiver would not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulations

Granting the waiver would not be detrimental to the historic character, environment, scenic value or general welfare of the Town.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments please feel free to contact the Community Development Office or your neighbors who volunteer on the Commission. Official public notice of the hearing will come later in June.

Meeting Results:



Each month this column will bring you a quick update on the results of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, and Historic District Commission's deliberations:

Zoning Board (ZBA)

The ZBA heard one new case in May and responded to a Requests for Re-hearing:

New Business:

1. Case #3975: Special Exception

The applicant, Masuma Barrett, PIN# 008-052-000, 340 Route 101, requests a Special Exception to establish a veterinary center with on-site staff housing utilizing the existing structures with additions to be constructed on approximately 15 acres of land in the Northern Transitional Zone.

The Special Exception application for a veterinary clinic was approved. No on-site staff housing will be allowed without a variance.

Other Business (Public Meeting):

2. Request for Rehearing – Case#3826

Stacy J. Clark, PIN# 001-013-000, 131 Hollis Road (Rte. 122) requested and was denied a variance to use the existing two-story building as business offices with a portion of the building being used for residential purposes for an indefinite period of time in the Residential/Rural Zone.

The request for rehearing was approved .

Planning Board (PB)

The PB heard two applications at the regular meeting. The regular meeting was followed by a worksession to discuss the proposed CIP Timeline and scope. More information on the CIP can be found on the [Special Projects](#) page.

- PZ3931 – Jason Ekstrom – Ekstrom Lawn Care, LLC – 4 Tech Circle – PIN #002-020-004:** Layout for landscaping company headquarters.

The application was tabled to the June 5th meeting to allow time for the applicant to add the following information to the plan: There will be no refueling done on site; Submission of an SPCC plan (spill prevention and contaminant containment plan); Show location of a ground water monitoring well; Addition of a 4 mil membrane under the asphalt and concrete surfaces; Dust containment management plan; Lighting plan; Location and screening of, and cleaning schedule for the portable toilet; Time frame for the construction of the permanent building; Replace barbed wire on fence with alternative security measures; Temporary building dimensions, including height and description; Address any chipping, grinding, and noise plans

- PZ3933 – George de Laire – 21 Clark Island Road – PIN#008-099-000:** Raze and rebuild house in place. Reduce impervious surface area and re-landscape areas.

The application was approved as presented.

(continued on p. 4)

Meeting Results (continued)

OLD BUSINESS

1. **John Woods – Old Mail Rd, PIN# 008-051-002:** (unable) re-submission of a conditional approved, expired Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) to address prior wetlands impacts on a vacant lot.

The application was tabled to the June 5th meeting as the applicant was not present.

Other Business:

2. Driveway Regulations Waiver Request – Department of Public Works—To allow for a 12” culvert instead of an 18” culvert

The application was approved.

3. Minutes of April 3rd and 17th Planning Board Meetings
4. Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk for 2013

The Board reelected Arnie Rosenblatt as Chair, Sally Wilkins as Vice Chair and Mike Del Orfano as Clerk.

Historic District Commission (HDC)

The HDC had a site walk on Saturday, May 11th for Case #3925 at 17 Foundry Street. The meeting on May 16th included two discussion items with Staff and two regular applications.

1. **Discussion of Waiver Criteria** – Sarah Marchant

Commission unanimously voted hold a public hearing to add the following waiver criteria to the Historic District Regulations: Section 2.H:

The Commission shall have the discretion to waive any condition contained in these Regulations for good cause shown. A waiver of these Regulations will be granted if each of the following conditions is found:

1. *Granting the waiver would benefit the public interest*
2. *By granting the waiver substantial justice would be done*
3. *Granting the waiver would not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulations*
4. *Granting the waiver would not be detrimental to the historic character, environment, scenic value or general welfare of the Town. (xx-xx-2013)*

The Public Hearing will be noticed for the July Commission meeting.

2. **Discussion on Trees, the RSA's and Recent Case Law** – Sarah Marchant

Commission asked Staff to contact the state Department of Historic Resources for any information they might be able to provide.

3. **Case #4037 – 13 Courthouse Road, PIN#017-114-000 – Bruce and Sandra Fraser** – to remove two hemlock trees on property line and one maple tree on the right front of the property.

Commission unanimously approved the removal of all three trees.

4. **Case #4010 – 1 Sunset Road, PIN #017-053-000 – Cory & Katy Kennedy** -- for French Doors, steps, and patio in back yard to provide access from the house to the back yard.

Commission unanimously approved the application to add French doors, Steps, and Patio in backyard to provide access from the house to the backyard with the following Conditions of Approval:

Because this is not a contributing property even though it should be, it does have an impact on surrounding properties. It is a significant property. Because there is limited public view and the patio and stairs are not in the public view, and because it is a non-contributing property, French doors, steps, and patio is approved as presented. Low E glass is acceptable. There will be all wood construction, Gelwyn doors as proposed, and both doors can be doors that open – as proposed in Option #2.



Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

Freedom's Way National Heritage Area includes communities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire (including Amherst) that share unique historical, natural and, cultural resources. The region is home to a series of historic events that influenced democratic forms of governance and intellectual traditions that underpin concepts of American freedom, democracy, conservation, and social justice. These 45 cities and towns share common themes that have contributed toward this special landscape of American History.

The stakeholders of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area (residents and business owners) are invited to participate in the creation of the Area's Management Plan. There will be a public meeting:

Saturday, June 22, 2013, from Noon- 4pm at the Lawrence Barn, Depot Road, Hollis, NH

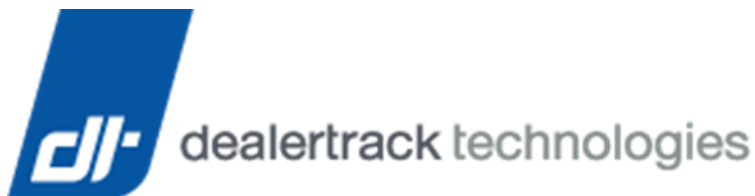
Hope you can come check this amazing project out and give your feedback.

Non-Residential Site Plan Update: Section 11: Personal Wireless Service Facilities

The Planning Board has proposed amendment to the Non-Residential Site Plan Regulations to align with the recent voter approved zoning changes to the Personal Wireless Facilities ordinance. The ordinance and regulations are being updated to comply with 2010 federal rulemakings from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC rulemakings require the Planning Board to approve applications for Personal Wireless Service Facilities within specified timeframes. If the Board fails to comply with the new FCC rulemakings, the applicant is automatically granted the permit. So, it is imperative for the Town to adopt the revised regulations to allow the Planning Board sufficient time to review all Personal Wireless Service Facilities prior to building permit issuance.

The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed Section 11 updates to the NRSP Regulations in July. Official Public Hearing notice will come in the next couple of weeks. Full text of the proposed changes are available on the [Special Projects](#) webpage or at the Community Development Office.

Welcome to Amherst!



Providing "web-enabled technology solutions for the retail automotive industry". Now located at 7 Route 101A. Check them out at:
www.dealertrack.com

Please join us in welcoming this dynamic company to Amherst !



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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.AMHERSTNH.GOV

The Community Development Office strives to effectively manage community change in accordance with the Master Plan and the Town's ordinances and regulations, by providing professional advice and technical expertise in a consistent and fair manner to citizens, boards and commissions, departments, and regional agencies on the implementation of land use ordinances, regulations, and policies for both the short and long term physical, natural, and economic development of the Town.

The Community Development Office is comprised of the Building, Zoning, Planning, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development Departments. The Office provides support to the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Amherst Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Heritage Commission, and the CIP Committee. The office provides a one-stop location for all land development processing in the Town.



NRPC UPDATE



SAVE THE DATE

Household Hazardous Waste & Electronics Collection

Thursday, JUNE 6th, 2013, 3:00-7:00pm

Watch your email for further details!!!

Regional Community Conversation Update:

What was said at the Regional Community Conversation?

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission hosted a regional community conversation with the assistance of NH Listens on April 30th. Over 70 interested residents from the region attended this workshop and were di-

vided into small discussion groups. Each group explored the topics of changing demographics, land use, infrastructure, natural resources, and economic vitality. The overall themes discovered in this workshop are available now [online](#) on the Granite State Future website.

New Regional Online Forum!

Have an idea to share? Or, did you miss us at one of our events but still want to give input on what you like best about the region or what could be better?

We now have our forum [online](#)!! You can pinpoint a specific location on our interactive map and talk about what you love about it or what could make it better. Or you can give input about a particular topic like housing or jobs

and the economy. This is your region, your input is needed!

Workforce Housing Law for Developers and Builders

Thursday, May 30th, 7:30am - 10:00am

It's been five years since the Workforce Housing Law was enacted. How have communities responded? What have we learned from the experiences of developers? How can you use the law to help advance good projects through the local permitting process? Learn some of the "do's and don't's" from professionals who have been in the trenches. We will provide plenty of Q+A time.

This mini conference is offered free of charge, but [please register using this link](#).